

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 SSO-00 /015 W
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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8156

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 4833

FOR: ARA/MGT - NO DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE ARA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC

SUBJ: EVALUATION OF CONSULAR FUNCTION

REF: STATE 244854

1. POST NOTES REFTEL INDICATES WISHES INFO RE ADDITIONAL
RESOURCE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE QUOTE AN IDEAL LEVEL OF
CONSULAR SERVICES UNQUOTE. POST IN RESPONSE ADDRESSES ITSELF
TO THAT IDEAL.

2. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

	NO. OF PSNS.	ANNUAL ALLOW	COST ANNUAL	TOTAL COST
SALARY				
POSITIONS:				
AMERICANS	1	15,600	17,231	32,831
FSL'S	2	---	9,200	9,200

OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES:

EQUIPMENT	8,000
FURNITURE (HOUSEHOLD)	11,000
FURNITURE (OFFICE)	8,000

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CONSULAR SUPPLIES	1,000
TRANSPORTATION IN SUPPORT OF FRAUD OFFICER'S ACTIVITIES	2,000
CONTRACT LAWYER	5,000
TOTAL	77,031

3. SECTION MOVED LAST MONTH TO NEW, SPACIOUS QUARTERS IN THE
EMBASSY ANNEX ACROSS FROM CHANCERY. RECEPTION AREAS ON BOTH

THE VISA SIDE AND CITIZENSHIP, NOTARIAL SIDE ARE LARGE AND COMFORTABLE AS TOO ARE WORK AREAS. THERE IS ROOM FOR SOME EXPANSION. IN MOVING FROM CHANCERY, CONSULAR SECTION LOST THE SERVICES OF A MARINE GUARD. SECTION NOW HAS SEPARATE ENTRANCE WITH HONDURAN BILINGUAL GUARD. WHILE LOCAL GUARD CERTAINLY COMPETENT, MARINE GUARD WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE ESPECIALLY WITH AMERICANS WHO ARE NOT ALWAYS WILLING TO ACCEPT LOCAL GUARD'S INFORMATION ESPECIALLY WHEN INFORMED THAT SECTION IS CLOSED. SOME NEW FURNISHINGS HAVE BEEN ORDERED FOR SECTION. MORE STORAGE SPACE IS REQUIRED INCLUDING ONE SAFE AND SEVERAL BAR LOCK CABINETS IN ADDITION TO FURNITURE NEEDED FOR NEW POSITIONS POST HAS REQUESTED.

4. WHILE ADEQUATE QUARTERS ARE NECESSARY TO CONSULAR OPERATION, CONSULAR SECTION CANNOT PROVIDE LEVEL OF SERVICE EXPECTED UNDER IDEAL CIRCUMSTANCES WITHOUT ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL. ONE ADDITIONAL OFFICER (FSO-6), TWO ADDITIONAL LOCAL EMPLOYEES, (FSL-9 AND FSL-6), AND ONE LAWYER ON CONTRACT IS NECESSARY TO SERVE THE PUBLIC, BOTH AMERICAN AND FOREIGN NATIONAL.

A) THE ADDITIONAL OFFICER IS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE THE FULL RANGE OF SERVICES TO THE TRAVELLING AMERICAN CITIZENS EXPECTED BY BOTH CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC AND ALSO TO MORE EFFICIENTLY PROCESS VISA APPLICANTS BOTH IMMIGRANT AND NONIMMIGRANT. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THIS POST HAS SPECIAL DEPARTMENTAL PERMISSION TO VISIT THE ONLY U.S. PRISONER IN HONDURAS (WHO IS INCARCERATED IN SAN PEDRO SULA) ONCE EVERY TWO MONTHS RATHER THAN ONCE

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EVERY MONTH AS PRESCRIBED BY REGULATION. IT IS CERTAINLY POSSIBLE THAT WE WILL HAVE IN THE FUTURE PRISONERS IN OTHER LESS-ACCESSIBLE PLACES. WELFARE WHEREABOUTS AND OTHER AMERICAN CITIZEN PROBLMES NEED ADDITIONAL OFFICER ATTENTION PARTICULARLY IN A COUNTRY WHERE SO MUCH IS HANDLED ON A PERSONAL LEVEL OFTEN REQUIRING THE CONSULAR OFFICER'S PERSONAL INTERVENTION TO AID THE TRAVELLER IN ANY OVERTURES MADE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. AT A TIME WHEN VISA FRAUD IS INCREASING AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASED REFUSAL RATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC SENSITIVITY TO VISA MATTERS IS HIGH, ADDITIONAL HELP DURING PEAK TIMES OF THE DAY ON THE NIV LINE WOULD ALLEVIATE SOME DISCONTENT AMONG APPLICANTS THAT THEY WERE NOT TREATED AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE. THE INCREASED NIV DENIAL RATE HAS ALSO LED TO A COMMENSURATE INCREASE IN CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE. AS THE POST STILL HAS A BACKLOG OF QUALIFIED IV APPLICANTS AS A RESULT OF THE CHANGE OF LAW, EXTRA HELP IS ALSO NEEDED IN IVS.

B) TWO ADDITIONAL LOCAL EMPLOYEES ARE NEEDED. ONE IS NEEDED TO COPE WITH THE EVER-INCREASING VISA WORKLOAD INCLUDING ACCEPTING NIV APPLICATIONS (FOR FY 77 WAS OVER 22,000, A 10 PERCENT INCREASE FROM FY 76), PROCESSING NIVS AND ALSO ASSISTING IN THE PREPARATION OF IVS DUE TO THE INCREASE TO BE GENERATED BY THE ADDITIONAL OFFICER'S HELP IN ALLEVIATING THE BACKLOG. THE

SECOND IS NEEDED TO CONDUCT FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS AT TIMES IN REMOTE PARTS OF THE COUNTRY (TIME CONSUMING DUE TO LACK OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES) AND TO ASSIST WITH CITIZENSHIP AND PROTECTION CASES WHICH OFTEN INVOLVE LENGTHY TELEPHONE CALLS TO ASCERTAIN EVEN THE MOST BASIC FACTS.

C) CONSULAR SECTION SHOULD ALSO HAVE A HONDURAN LAWYER ON A CONTRACT BASIS TO AID IN OBTAINING A TIMELY TRIAL FOR AMCIT PRISONERS WHERE THOSE CITIZENS CANNOT AFFORD AN ATTORNEY AS THE COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS HAVE PROVED THEMSELVES LESS THAN RELIABLE. THIS CONTRACT LAWYER COULD AID IN OTHER CASES INVOLVING AMCITS WHERE COMPLETE EXPLANATION OF HONDURAN LAW ACTION IS NECESSARY. IN A COUNTRY WHERE MUCH DEPENDS ON PERSONAL CONTACTS AND ALMOST CONSTANT REMINDERS TO OBTAIN ACTION, THIS EMBASSY NEEDS AN ATTORNEY FAMILIAR WITH BOTH HONDURAN LAW

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AND WITH THE SYSTEM. PRESENTLY THERE ARE SEVERAL CASES WHICH HAVE BEEN PENDING BEFORE THE COURTS FOR EXTENDED PERIODS AND IF VIEWED TOGETHER COULD, WHILE NOT A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS PER SE, BE SO REGARDED IN THE U.S.

5. FSL TRAINING PROGRAMS: DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE HONDURAN SOCIETY, MANY MARRIED WOMEN WITH CHILDREN WORK IN THE EMBASSY. THEY OFTEN MUST REQUEST LEAVE FOR EMERGENCY PURPOSES CONCERNING THEIR FAMILY AND TAKE EXTENDED PERIOD OF LEAVE FOR PREGNANCY OR MUST RESIGN AS A RESULT OF THE INCREASED SIZE OF THEIR FAMILIES. PARTIALLY TO COMPENSATE FOR THESE CHANGES AND ABSENCES, PARA 3 ABOVE REQUESTED TWO ADDITIONAL POSITIONS. THESE NEW POSITIONS, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT ALLEVIATE THE NEED FOR A CORE GROUP OF MORE PERMANENT EMPLOYEES WHO ARE WELL TRAINED, VERSATILE AND COULD AID IN THE TRAINING OF NEW FSLs. WORKSHOPS FOR THE SENIOR FSLs AS THOSE NOW BEING TESTED AT FSI AND AREA WORKSHOPS IN VISA CITIZENSHIP, ETC. WOULD GREATLY INCREASE THE FSL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SECTION.

BARTCH

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